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Location= Containment

Terms and People

1. Ho Chi Minh is all for Democracy but he was a Communist and Nationalist

- Began speaking out about French Colonialism while living in France during WWI
- Helps to create the Indochinese Communist Party in 1930
- Goals: Land reform and an independent unified Vietnam
- Was trained by OSS forces around 1945
- Led the Viet Minh before, during and after WWII
- Ho, looked to Mao for assistance
- Ho's forces will defeat the French at Dien Bien Phu which will lead the French to peace talks at Geneva; France agrees to elections in 1956 regarding the issue of ratification
- The US and South Vietnam refuse to recognize the Geneva Accords

2. Viet Minh: League for the Independence for Vietnam

- Formed by Ho Chi Minh and Vo Nguyen Giap in 1941 to drive out the Japanese, helped to defeat the Japanese during WWII
- Defeated French in 1954; this is known as the First Indochina War
- Goal: Create a Communist government in the Northern region of Vietnam

3. Viet Cong: National Liberation Front

- Viet Cong- S. Vietnamese "Communist" guerrillas, created in 1960
- Only about 10% were actually communists, most of the VC were Nationalist peasants and intellectuals
- Up until 1963 VC do much of the fighting against South Vietnamese Government/Americans

4. Bao Dai

- March 1945 Bao is installed as the emperor of Vietnam
- He renames the country Vietnam
- He will be in charge of S. Vietnam from 1949-55
- He is French educated and will not be liked by many because of this
- Bao cared very little about the issues facing Vietnam, Ho convinces Bao to hand power over in 1945; Diem tried to stop
- The French will convince Bao to return in 1949 and the US will recognize the Bao govt. In 1950; we became more interested because China becomes communist and the Korean War

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- Geneva Accords are signed; the French and Ho agree to partition Vietnam into 2 Countries
- The US and South Vietnam will not accept, it was France's way to withdraw from Vietnam and Indochina as a whole- France will leave Vietnam in 1957

5. Ngo Dinh Diem
   - Takes over S. Vietnam in June 1954 and refuses to allow for the vote on reunification; Anti-Commie
   - Devout catholic, this is very important because many Catholics were living in North Vietnam but they migrate to S Vietnam (Almost 1 M) while the borders remained open, this helps him gain more political support
   - Corrupt- Executes 50,000 communists and Dissidents, imprisons 75,000
   - Diem was popular at first but after his suppression of Buddhists will lead many against him.
   - The US will eventually encourage the military to overthrow Diem
   - Overthrown on Nov. 2nd 1963 and shot in the head. 3 weeks later JFK was shot and killed

II) How it Happened

1. Potsdam Conference: Agreed upon that the Chinese Nationalists would occupy the northern part of Vietnam and the British would occupy the southern part of Vietnam
2. PM Churchill wanted Indochina to be returned to France.
   a. It would help the UK hold onto their own territories for a little longer
   b. Atlee, who replaced Churchill at the Conference, was not keen on the idea of losing colonies too quickly as well
3. The US will support the Diem government from 1954-63; Policy of Containment and Domino theory is at play.
4. 1955 the US creates SEATO (SE Asian Treaty Org.) it was the Asian version of NATO; this was made because of the Domino Theory
5. In 1955 Pres. Eisenhower will send in 700 Military and Civilian advisors to Diem; "I cannot conceive of a greater tragedy for America than to get heavily involved now in an all out war in any of those regions"
6. President Kennedy will gradually send in more troops year after year
7. Gulf of Tonkin: Aug 2nd 1964
   a. Operation Desoto Patrol: Destroyers used for intel gathering in international waters along the coasts of China, USSR, N Vietnam and N. Korea
   b. USS Maddox is attacked by 3 North Vietnamese torpedo boats
   c. President Johnson is surprised by the attack and decided to stay

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   d. Johnson orders the 7th fleet carrier to retaliate
8. Gulf of Tonkin Resolution; August 7th 1964
9. Senate on the hells of the 2 attacks in the Gulf of Tonkin will pass the resolution; 98-02
10. Pres. Johnson is basically given authority to wage war after accusing N. Vietnam of “open aggression on the high seas”
11. This becomes the basis for pursuing the Vietnam war; The GTR is ended on Dec 31 1970